

Park Road Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111192
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	378245
Inspection dates	1–2 May 2012
Lead inspector	John Dunne

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Goodwin
Headteacher	Nicky Harris
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

John Dunne
Peter Jones

Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 14 lessons taught by 10 teachers. These included short visits to a range of phonics (teaching of letters and sounds) sessions taught by teachers and trained assistants. Inspectors also sampled pupils' work and heard a number of pupils read. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and school staff, including senior and middle managers. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school planning, the safeguarding policies, and the school's analysis of pupils' progress. They also analysed 79 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and others completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

In this average-sized primary school most pupils are of White British heritage. There are very few pupils who have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average. The school meets the current floor standards, which are the minimum standards expected by the government. Over the past three years the school has experienced a large number of staffing changes. The school has received a number of awards, including the Eco-School award and Healthy School status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall Effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- Park Road is a good and rapidly improving school. The drive and high expectations of senior leaders and members of the governing body, and the outstanding behaviour of pupils make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. The school is not yet outstanding because, although teaching is good overall, not enough is yet consistently outstanding.
- Achievement is good. Positive action has led to rapid and sustained progress in improving attainment in mathematics and English which is securely above average. The previous gap between the achievement of boys and girls has been eliminated.
- Teaching is mostly good and sometimes outstanding. In a small number of lessons, teachers do not always sustain a good pace of learning, or always plan imaginative activities to capture pupils' interest sufficiently. Most teaching skilfully adapts work to pupils' needs and abilities. Questioning is used deftly to check pupils' understanding. Effective support from skilled teaching assistants and well-targeted additional provision for gifted and talented pupils and those who are supported by school action plus or who have special educational needs ensure that all groups make good progress and achieve well.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and this is reflected in their high attendance. Pupils' extremely positive attitudes in classrooms and willingness to work together and cooperate, underpin their outstanding behaviour. Pupils say how safe they feel in school and that they are exceptionally well cared for by the adults working with them.
- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher, with strong support from the governing body, are driving the school forward successfully. They are especially effective in developing the skills of teachers through the use of performance management and sharply focused training. Middle leaders have begun to monitor their areas of responsibility. School leaders recognise that this needs developing further and have clear plans for how this is going to be achieved.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is consistently outstanding by:
 - embedding further the programme of modelling best practice to ensure that all teachers develop the skills to enable pupils learn at a fast enough pace ensuring that the variety of activities in all lessons is sufficient to keep pupils fully engaged at all times.
- Make leadership and management even more effective in raising achievement by improving the impact of middle leaders so that they have more opportunities to monitor their areas of responsibility and thus increase their contribution to school improvement.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' achieve well. In lessons they are keen to learn and their outstanding behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning ensure that lessons are not disrupted. Pupils are skilled independent learners and respond very positively to the high expectations of their teachers. This closely matches the views expressed by the large majority of parents and carers who say their children's progress is good.

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are generally in line with those expected for their age. They make good progress in Reception because new leadership has quickly embedded a wide range of stimulating and challenging activities both indoors and outdoors which are closely matched to children's needs. Good progress continues throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. By the end of both key stages, attainment is above average and rising rapidly and securely in mathematics and English. Assessment data show that pupils are making better progress than all pupils nationally given their starting points. The school has effective systems for monitoring the progress of pupils, which teachers use well to set challenging targets. As a result, work in lessons is matched closely to pupils' abilities by teachers and teaching assistants. In most lessons, pupils make good progress because the pace of learning is brisk and probing questioning deepens pupils' understanding. This was seen in an outstanding mathematics lesson where the teacher and teaching assistant had re-shaped learning activities based on accurate assessment of pupils' learning and progress from the last lesson. Pupils made rapid gains in their understanding of prime numbers as they worked at a fast pace on highly individualised, challenging investigations. Their learning accelerated as adults circulated to check on progress using very effective questioning to make pupils think deeply about the tasks they were doing. Data provided by the school and the work in pupils' books confirm the good and improving progress that inspectors observed in almost all lessons and show that attainment is accelerating rapidly. All groups of pupils, including pupils supported at school action plus or with special educational needs also make good progress because support is so well targeted. Previous gaps between the attainment of boys and girls have been closed successfully.

Observations by inspectors listening to pupils read show that pupils enjoy reading and that attainment in reading by the end of Year 2 is above average and improving due to the effective teaching of phonics. Attainment in reading is above average by the time pupils leave in Year 6.

Quality of teaching

Good teaching, with some that is outstanding, and very effective support are key factors in pupils' good and improving achievement. Previous weaknesses in teaching have been tackled rigorously and this is bringing about a positive impact on accelerating pupils' progress. An overwhelming majority of parents and carers agree that teaching is good. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and thoughtfully match the curriculum to capture their interest and meet their particular needs. Teachers and teaching assistants work very closely and effectively to plan interesting lessons. In the best lessons, pupils talk enthusiastically to their partners, confidently justifying their ideas, using vocabulary accurately and helping each other to consolidate their understanding and extend new learning. Investigations are widely and effectively used to encourage pupils to discuss and think deeply about their learning, justify their ideas and devise strategies to solve problems. This was seen in a very successful English lesson where pupils discussed and came up with their own success criteria for their learning. Pupils then used these very successfully to produce news stories which developed further their already above-average writing skills. This was typical of a number of lessons observed which strongly promoted pupils' spiritual, moral, social and understanding by getting them to express their feelings about local and international social issues. In a small number of lessons, the pace of learning slows because teachers are still developing their skills and do not always keep pupils on task for the whole lesson or provide tasks that are sufficiently interesting to engage pupils fully.

The planned curriculum is used creatively to enable pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills to practical contexts effectively, building upon their prior learning successfully. Pupils know their targets, receive frequent spoken comments on the quality of their work and are given clear pointers for improvement in written feedback in their books. Pupils' high levels of enjoyment, pride in their work, willingness to engage in partner talk, work individually and rise to the high expectations of their teachers contribute strongly to their good achievement

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. This is a harmonious school community in which respect and tolerance permeate throughout. Almost all questionnaires returned by parents and carers expressed the view that behaviour is a strength of the school. Pupils say that lessons are almost never disrupted by any bad behaviour. This closely matched what inspectors saw in lessons and by school records of behaviour. Pupils make an exceptional contribution to their own learning in the way they are able to work both collaboratively and independently and display considerable maturity in their ability to manage their own learning. Older pupils take responsibility for caring for younger pupils, for example, as play leaders. Pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong and demonstrate this in their high standards of behaviour, good manners and respect for adults and fellow pupils. Pupils say that bullying of any kind almost never happens and rare instances are dealt with swiftly. Pupils are thoughtful, considerate and safety conscious when moving around school and playing outside. All pupils know what they need to do to stay safe, such as when using new

technology. Pupils enjoy excellent relationships with the staff and have great trust in them. Pupils who are disabled or whose circumstances make them vulnerable are treated with great sensitivity and care and this makes a strong contribution to their academic and personal development. Pupils' positive attitudes to school and their enjoyment of lessons are demonstrated in their consistently high levels of attendance.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, senior leaders and members of the governing body provide strong vision and direction for the school. Unavoidable staff disruptions in recent years have presented many challenges. Over the past two years, this has resulted in some fluctuations in attainment. Despite these challenges, the dogged determination of school leaders to strive for improvement has resulted in standards continuing to rise. More recently, the school has had stability in staffing. This has enabled the school to embed many measures which are leading to rapidly rising attainment, especially in English and mathematics. For example, rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning has identified where improvements in teaching can be made. The deputy headteacher, who provides an outstanding role model of classroom practice, manages highly effective professional development for staff including their performance management. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved significantly, although the school is aware of where some inconsistencies still remain. Members of staff have embraced these developments wholeheartedly. Teamwork is very strong across the school in pursuit of improvement. The school has developed sophisticated systems for checking on pupils' progress which teachers use effectively to quickly identify and remedy gaps in learning and then to set challenging targets to accelerate progress. Accurate self-evaluation, strong leadership and a track record of improvement since the previous inspection show that the school has strong capacity to improve further. The developing expertise and experience of middle leaders means that they are now well placed to increase their involvement in school improvement. At present they have too few opportunities to monitor their own areas of responsibility, but there are clear plans for them to do so.

The good curriculum is broad and balanced and provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. It contributes well to pupils' good spiritual, moral and social development, but the school recognises the need to do more to give pupils further, first-hand opportunities to experience other cultures and has clear strategies to achieve this.

The governing body is extremely well informed. It provides effective challenge and support to leaders and managers. The school meets all safeguarding requirements. Adults, including administrators, site supervisors and lunchtime staff, all pay close attention to pupils' safety and well being. Discrimination of any sort is not tolerated and there is a strong and effective commitment to promoting equality of opportunity. This results in the good achievement of all groups of pupils, including those who are supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



3 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Park Road Community Primary School, Warrington, WA5 3EF

Many thanks to all of you for the welcome you gave to the inspection team when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting and talking with so many of you. You are right to be proud of your school. It is a good and rapidly improving school that takes good care of you and helps you to achieve well. It was pleasing to hear that you feel safe in school and are confident that the staff will give you help when you need it. Many of you talked about how lessons are fun and interesting. We were particularly pleased to see your outstanding behaviour and how very polite and well mannered you are. You have excellent attitudes to learning, concentrate hard and enjoy all of the different activities school puts on for you at lunch time and after school. It is clear that the leaders and managers, together with the governing body and all staff, have worked with great dedication and success to make the school an enjoyable place for you to learn. We were particularly impressed by the way everyone gets on so well together.

In order to help you to achieve even better standards, we have asked the school to improve in a few areas. We have asked that:

- all teachers plan lesson activities which are going to keep everyone on task throughout the whole lesson
- more teachers get involved in checking up on your learning so that you can improve even more.

I am confident that you will support your teachers in making these improvements and I wish you the very best for your future.

Yours sincerely

John Dunne
Lead inspector

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